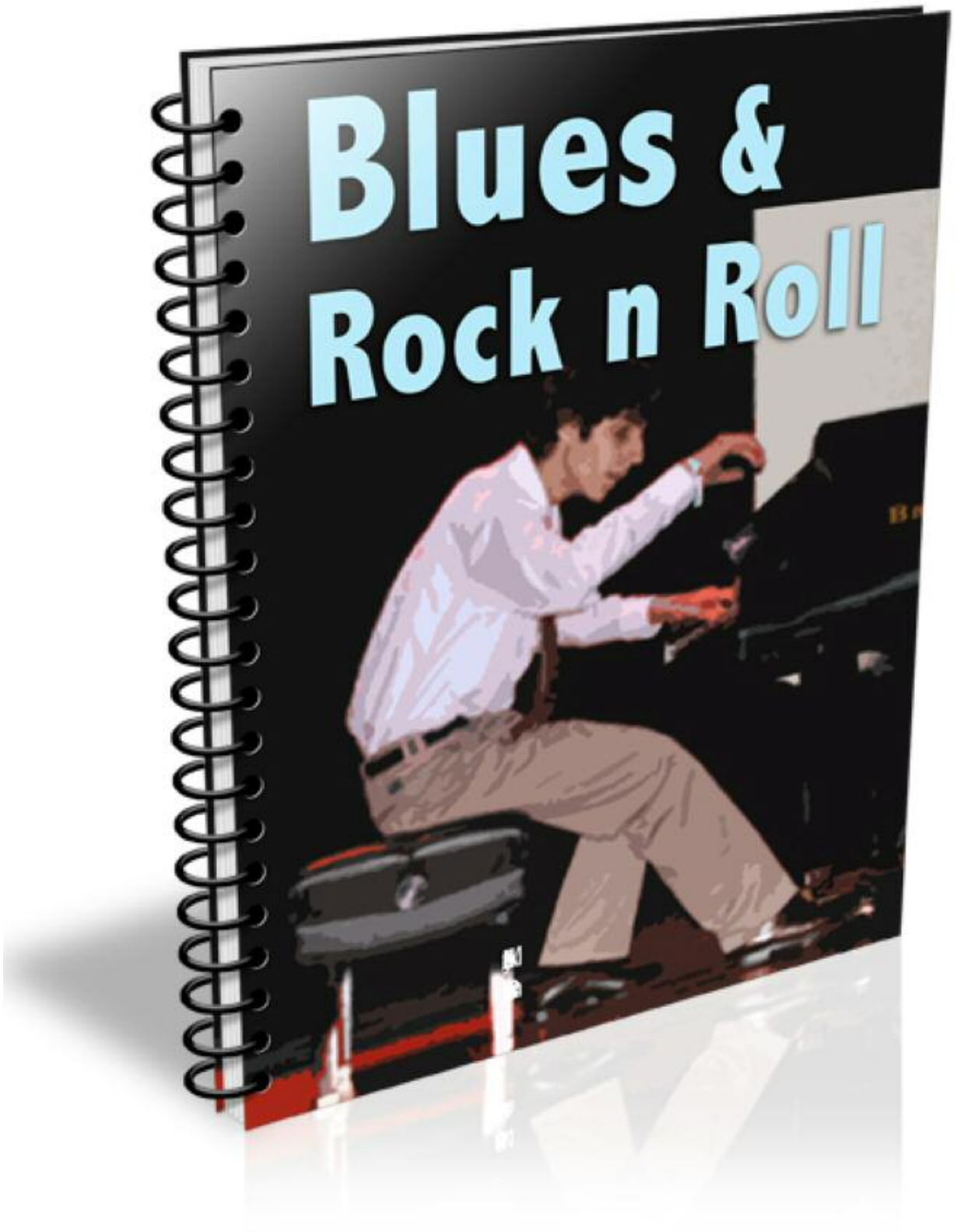

Blues &
Rock n Roll

FOREWORD

The easiest way to learn Blues piano is to learn the LEFT HAND rhythms LONG before you learn all the fancy licks in the Right Hand.

You need to be able to play these Left Hand rhythms in your sleep.

Play them over and over THOUSANDS of times. Watch TV while you play them - just get your mind and fingers used to them - build those Blues muscles!

As you work your way through the next few books play these Blues Rhythms in each practice session and then by book 8 you will be ready to add in the tricky Right Hand blues licks and patterns.

Enjoy.

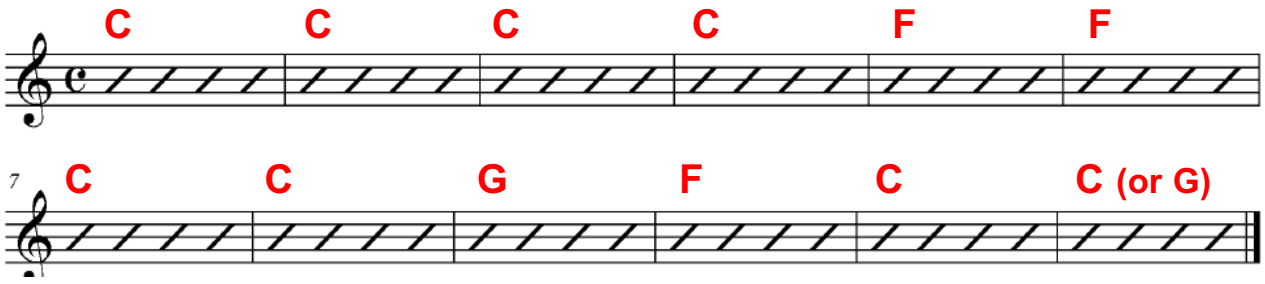
RHYTHM # 1

BASIC TRIAD BLUES

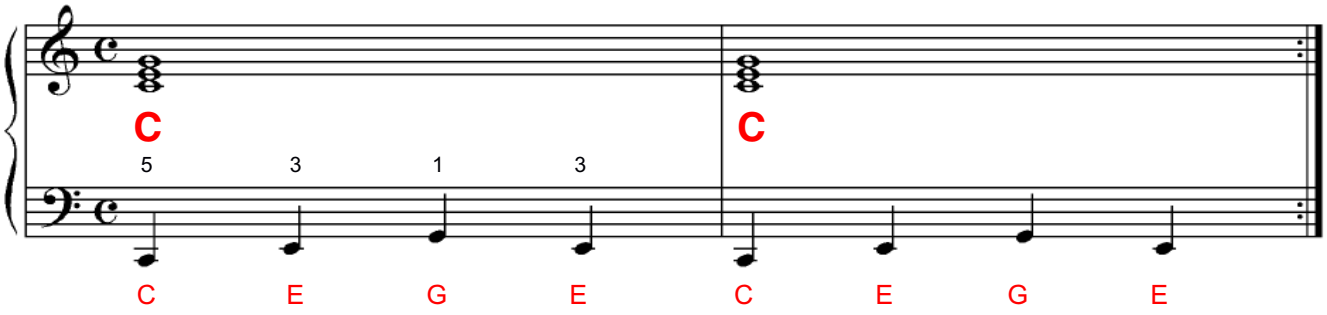
BASIC TRIAD BLUES

The most basic blues tune is a combination
of three chords played over 12 bars.

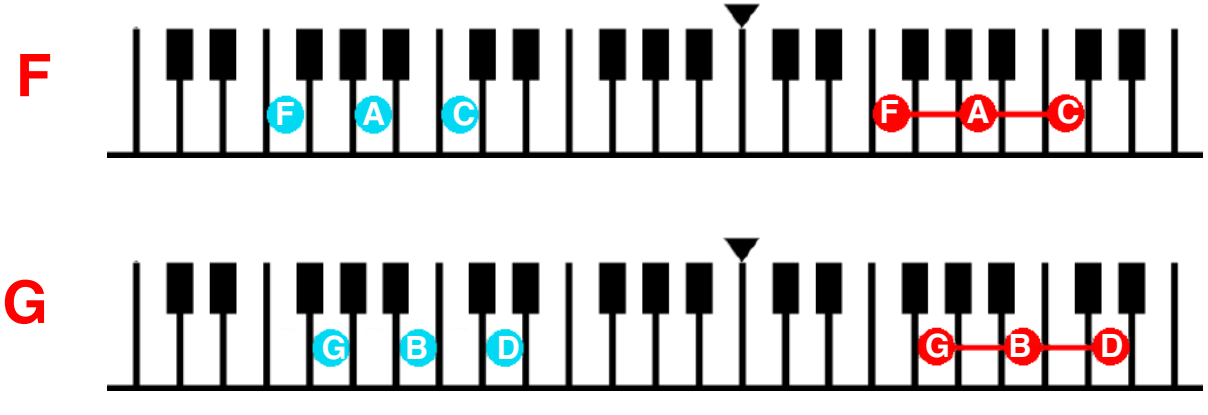
To begin with we'll use the key of C.
The three chords from the key of C will be C - F and G (all major chords)
The sequence is as follows



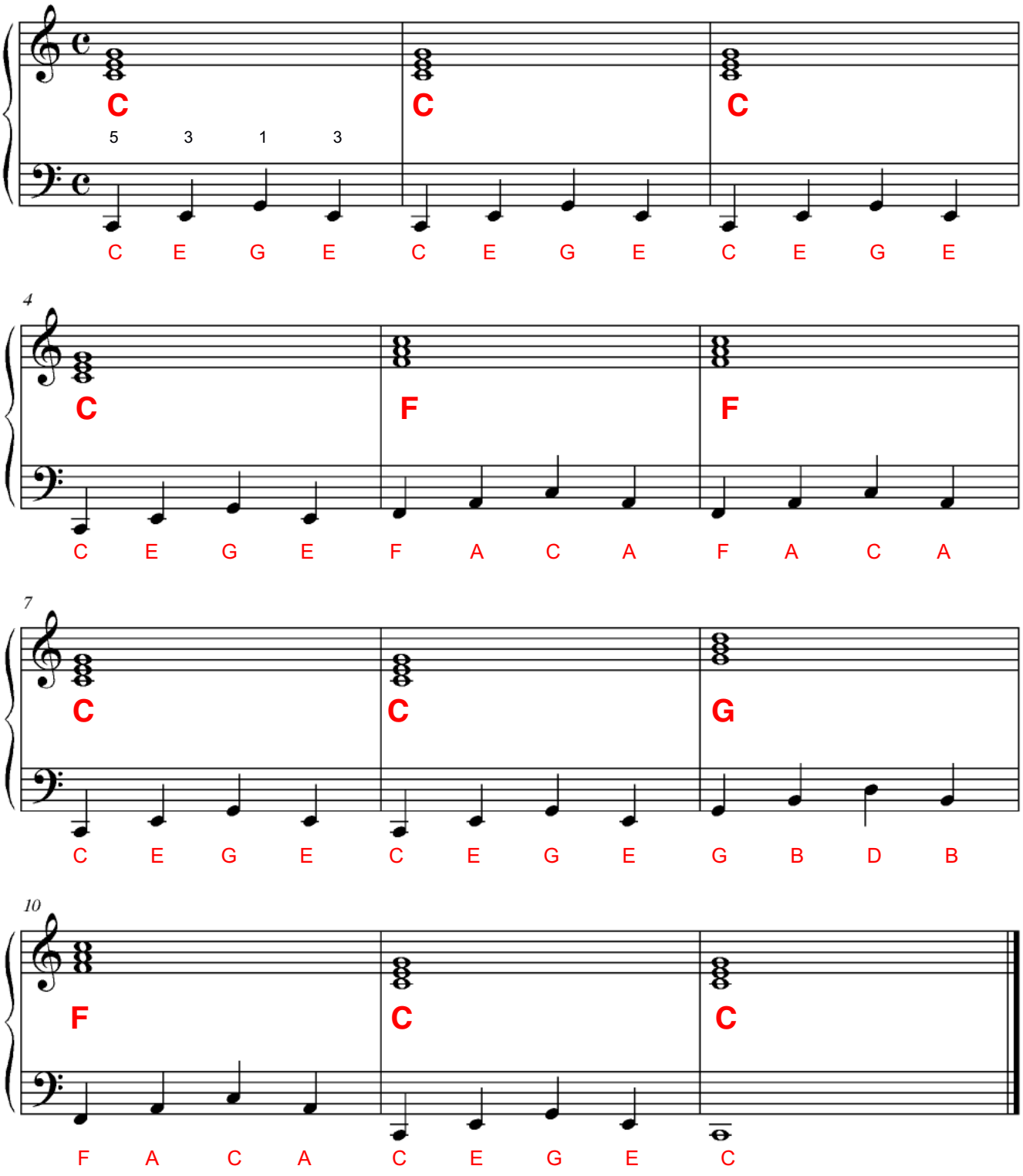
To get you started well use a really basic left hand rhythm that uses the three notes of the basic chord. (Just HOLD a C chord in the Right Hand)



Now TRANSPOSE the pattern to the chords of F and G and try the next tune.



BASIC TRIAD BLUES



RHYTHM # 2

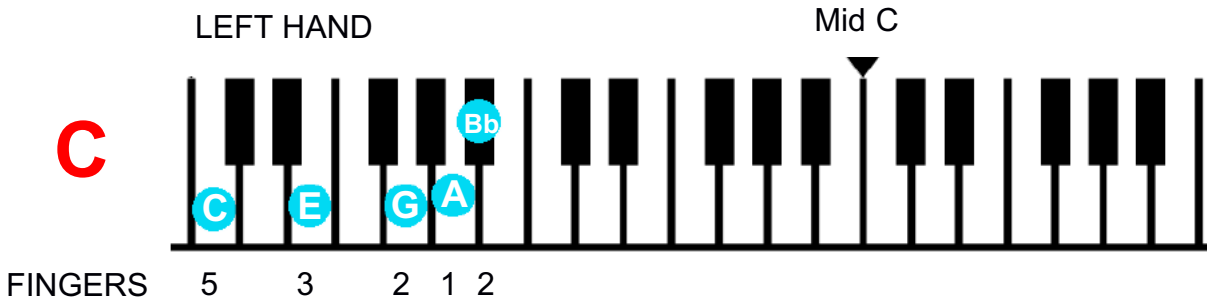
STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE

STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE RHYTHM part 1

(Jerry Lee Lewis)

Play these notes in the LEFT HAND separately from C up to Bb back down to E

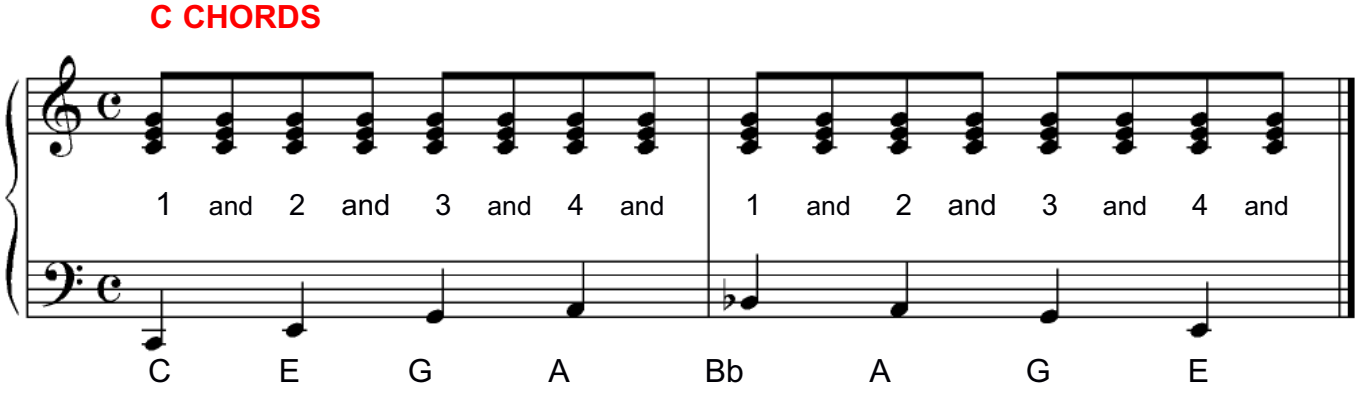
(Use the correct fingering - notice you swivel on your thumb up to the Bb back to the G)



Remember - play C, then E, then G, then A, then Bb, then A again, down to G, and E - REPEAT

Now play a RIGHT HAND C chord (at middle C) **IN BETWEEN** each of the left hand notes

The above way is the easiest way to play this rhythm but the Jerry Lee Lewis way is to play 2 RIGHT hand chords for each left hand note. (8 HALF BEATS per bar)



STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE part 2

Now that you can play the sequence using the chord of C, try transposing it all to the chords of F and G.

Notice that all three patterns are almost IDENTICAL but the G pattern ends on a white note instead of a black note

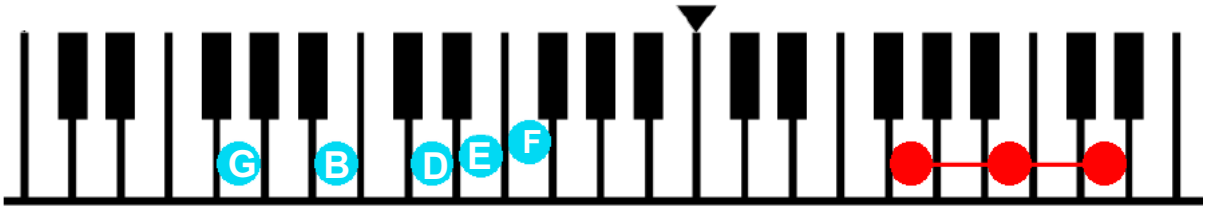
C

FINGERS 5 3 2 1 2 C CHORD

F

FINGERS 5 3 2 1 2 F CHORD

G



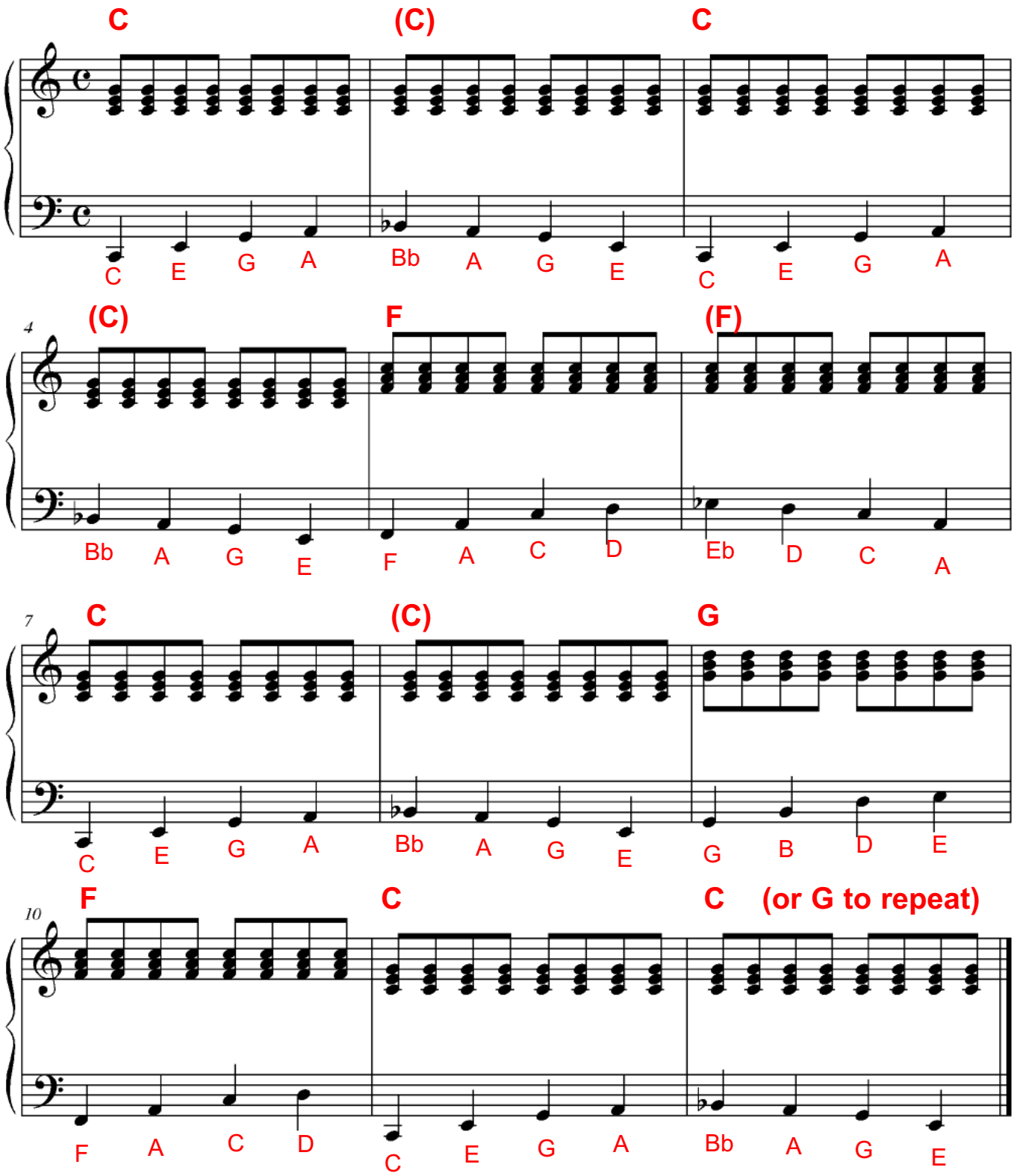
FINGERS 5 3 2 1 2 G CHORD

Now try the Jerry Lee Lewis style blues tune on the next page.

STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE part 3

12 BAR JERRY LEE STYLE BOOGIE

* In bars 9 and 10 you only play half the left hand pattern for each chord

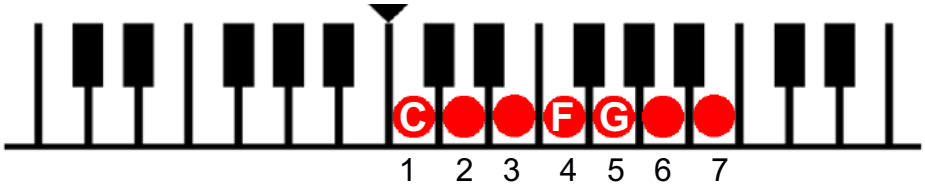


STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE part 4

HOW TO WORK OUT A 12 BAR BLUES IN ANY KEY

The most basic 12 bar Blues only uses three chords.

For instance, in the key of C we use the chords C, F and G
If you go by the scale of C you will see that the three chords are built on the 1st, 4th and 5th notes of the scale (These chords are known as I, IV and V)



If we use this formula we can figure out the three basic Blues chords of ANY key.
Here is the standard Blues progressions for the easier keys.

12 Bar Blues in C

C	C	C	C	F	F
C	C	G	F	C	C or G

12 Bar Blues in G

G	G	G	G	C	C
G	G	D	C	G	G or D

12 Bar Blues in F

F	F	F	F	Bb	Bb
F	F	C	Bb	F	F or C

12 Bar Blues in A

A	A	A	A	D	D
A	A	E	D	A	A or E

12 Bar Blues in C

D	D	D	D	G	G
D	D	A	G	D	D or A

STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE
PRACTICE SONGS

Try the following songs using the STRAIGHT EIGHT BOOGIE. Remember there are two ways to play it - with the Right Hand chord in-between each Left Hand note or using a Right Hand chord on every beat. It makes a big difference to the song!

ALL SHOOK UP The key of **G** Alternating Right Hand

BLUE SUEDE SHOES **G** (opening riff F# on to G) Alternating Right Hand

CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE (Queen) **G** Alternating Right Hand

DIZZY MISS LIZZIE **C** Full Right Hand

GOOD GOLLY MISS MOLLY (Little Richard) **C** Full Right Hand

GREAT BALLS OF FIRE (Jerry Lee Lewis) Full Right Hand

HOUND DOG (Elvis) Alternating Right Hand

JAILHOUSE ROCK **G** (opening riff F# on to G) Alternating Right Hand

JOHHNY B. GOODE (Chuck Berry) **A** Full Right Hand

LONG TALL SALLY (Little Richard) **C** Full Right Hand

LUCILLE (Little Richard) **C** Full Right Hand

ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN (Chuck Berry) **G** Full Right Hand

TEDDY BEAR **C** Alternating Right Hand

THAT'S ALRIGHT MAMA **D** Alternating Right Hand

TUTTI FRUTTI (Little Richard) **C** Full Right Hand

WHOLE LOT OF SHAKIN (Jerry Lee Lewis) **G** Full Right Hand

RHYTHM # 3

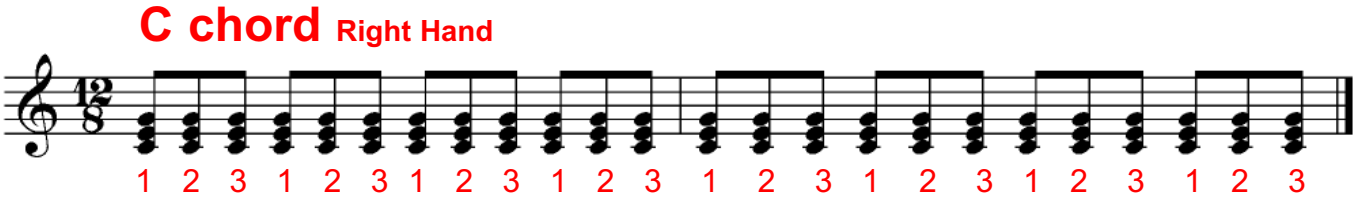
BLUEBERRY HILL

BLUEBERRY HILL RHYTHM

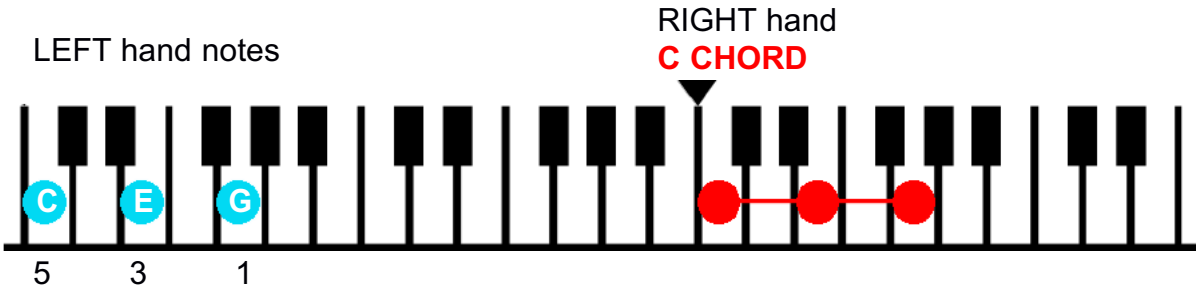
This is a rhythm known as 12/8 TIME or TRIPLET FEEL

TRIPLET FEEL means that the basic rhythm comes in GROUPS of three notes.
In 12/8 TIME there are FOUR of these groups (of 3 beats) per bar.

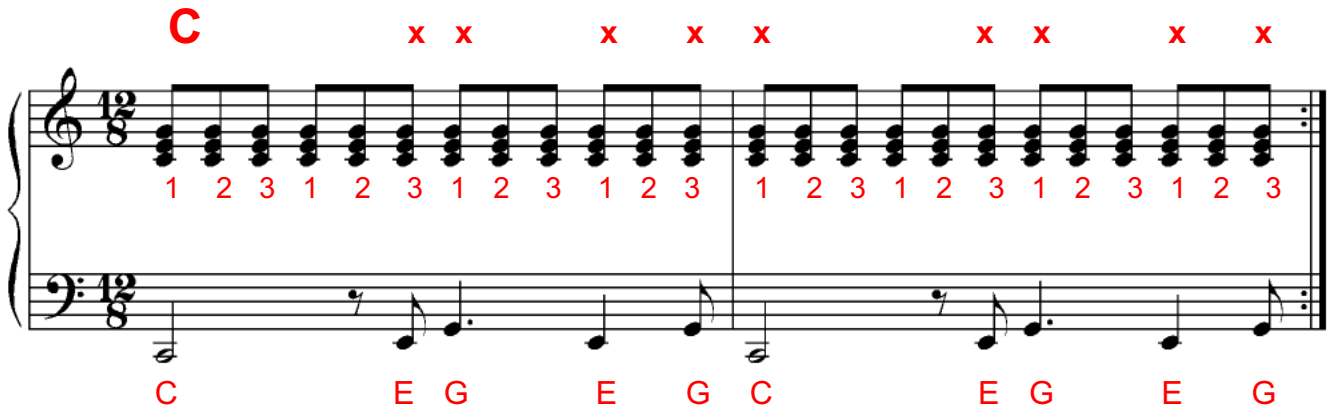
So the RIGHT hand will be playing 12 ‘beats’ per bar. Try it now with a C CHORD.



The LEFT hand plays a 3 note pattern
Like the TWIST rhythm the 3 notes of the LEFT hand ‘match’ the 3 notes of the RIGHT hand chord



Practise it SLOWLY at first.
Look carefully where the left hand notes come in (**x**)



Now TRANSPOSE this rhythmic pattern to the chords of F and G (below mid C) and you’ll have the 3 main chords for BLUEBERRY HILL

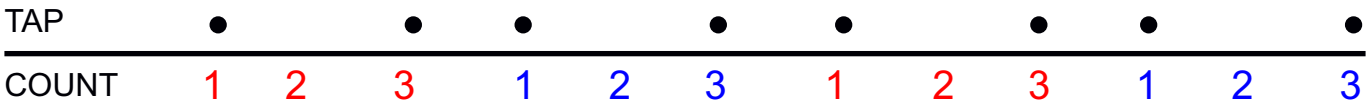
RHYTHM # 4

12/8 BOOGIE SHUFFLE

12/8 BOOGIE SHUFFLE RHYTHM

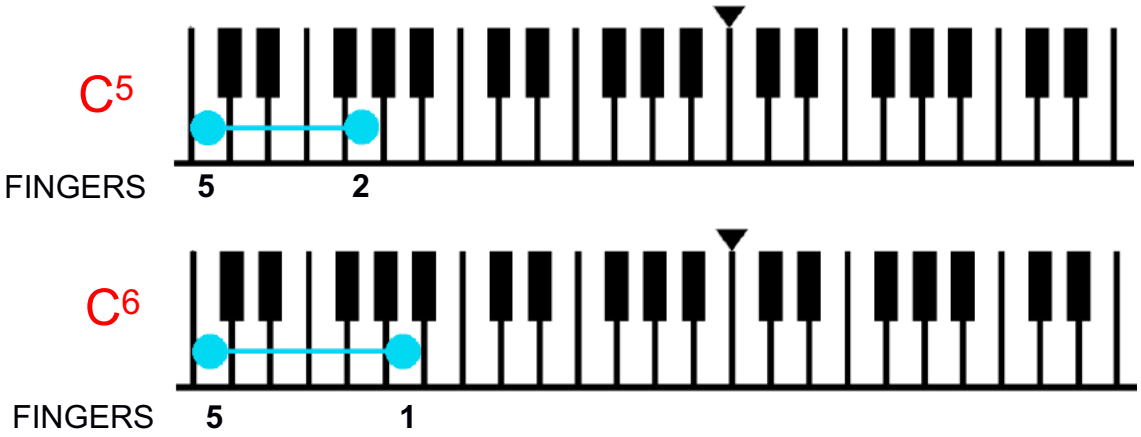
Remember how you counted 12 beats in each bar in BLUEBERRY HILL?

Count the same TRIPLET FEEL rhythm (4 groups of three beats)
and TAP out a rhythm on the 1st and 3rd beats ONLY (leave out the 2nd beat)

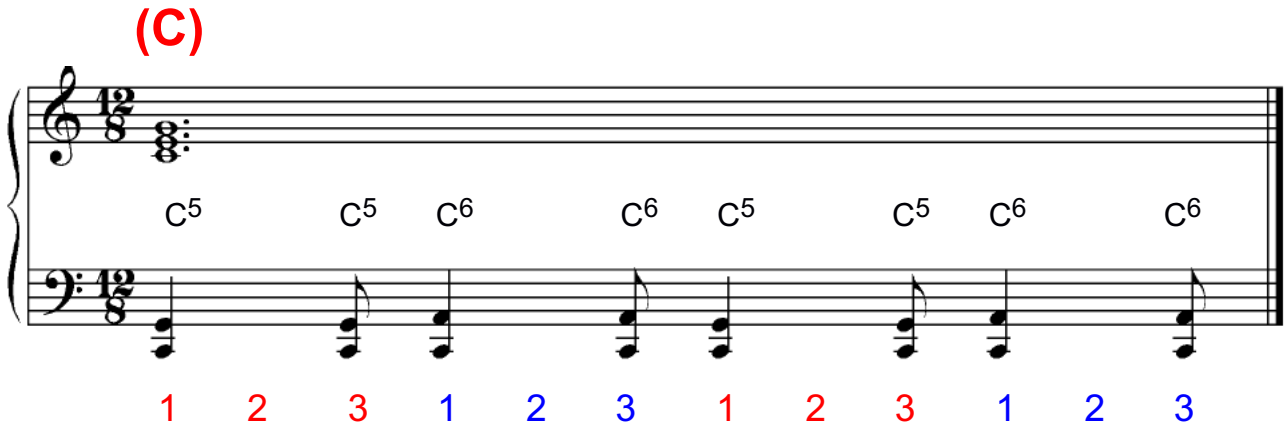


Notice how it ‘SHUFFLES’ along

Now find these ‘2-note’ chord shapes with your LEFT hand.

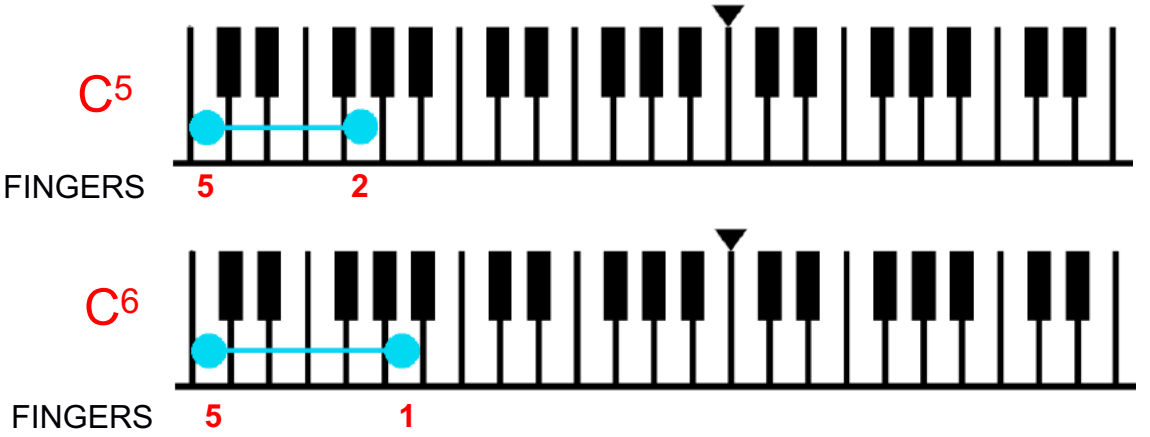


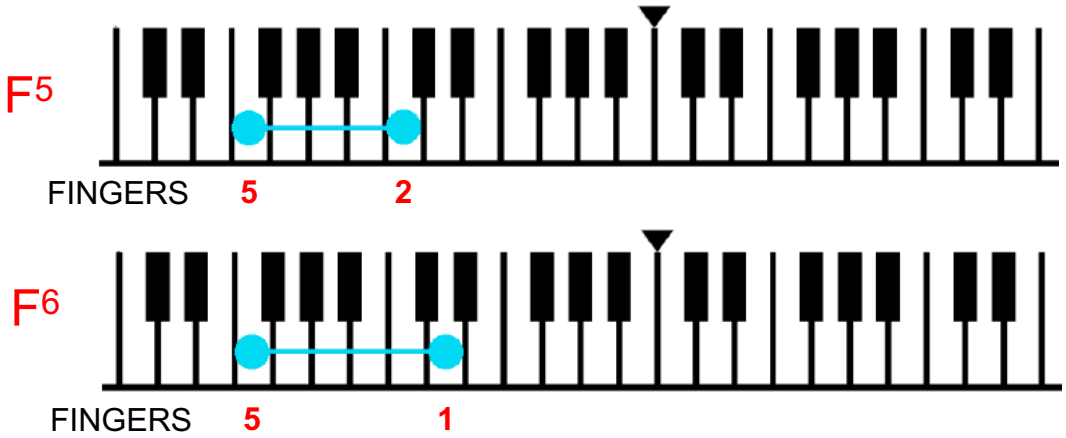
Try the rhythm using the two chord shapes

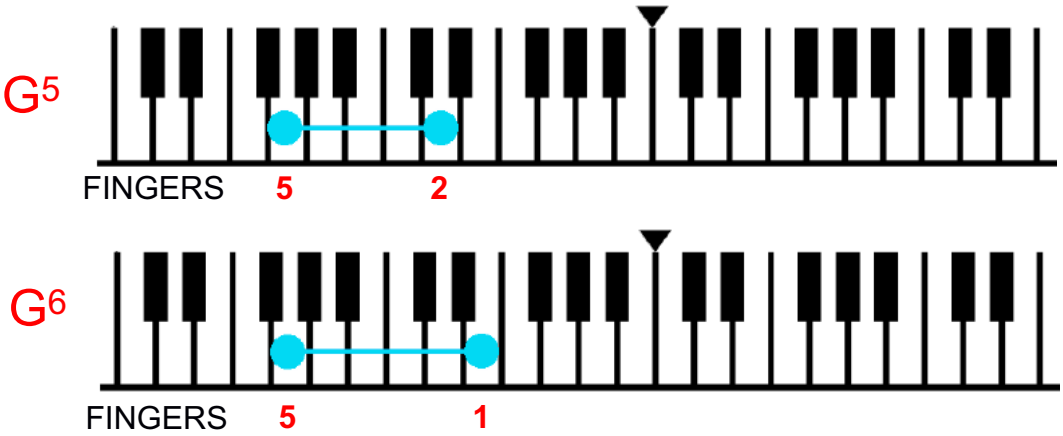


12/8 BOOGIE SHUFFLE part 2

NOW TRANSPOSE the chord shapes to F and G and then play the 12 bar blues on the next page

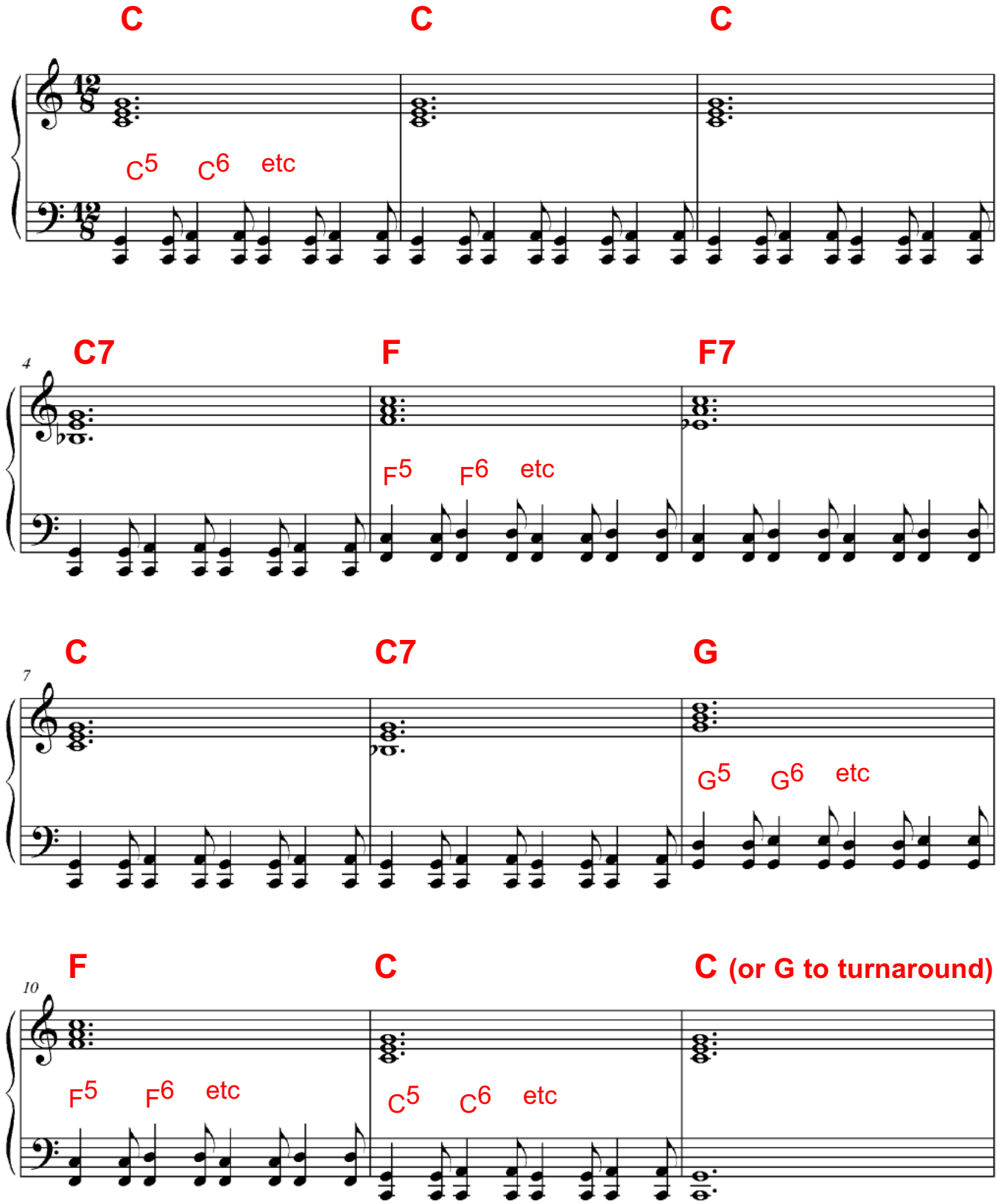






12/8 BOOGIE SHUFFLE 12 BAR BLUES

Notice that the RIGHT hand plays and HOLDS the
relevant C, F or G chord on the first beat of each bar



SONGS FOR 12/8 BOOGIE SHUFFLE PRACTICE

BE BOP A LULA (Gene Vincent) In the key of **C**

GET BACK (Beatles) **F**

FOR YOU BLUE (Beatles)

YER BLUES (Beatles) **C**

NO PARTICULAR PLACE TO GO (Chuck Berry) **G**

BRAND NEW LEOPARDSKIN PILLBOX HAT **G** (Bob Dylan)

MEET ME IN THE MORNIN' (Bob Dylan) **G**

BEEN DOWN SO LONG **G** (Sting)

ANY WAY YOU WANT - LET IT ROLL (Elvis)

GOT A WOMAN MEAN AS SHE CAN BE **G**

HONKY TONK WOMAN (Stones) **G**

IN THE SUMMERTIME (Mungo Jerry) **C**

AINT THAT A SHAME (Fats Domino) **C**

I'M WALKIN' (Fats Domino)

THE WANDERER

CARS HISS BY MY WINDOW
ROADHOUSE BLUES (Doors)

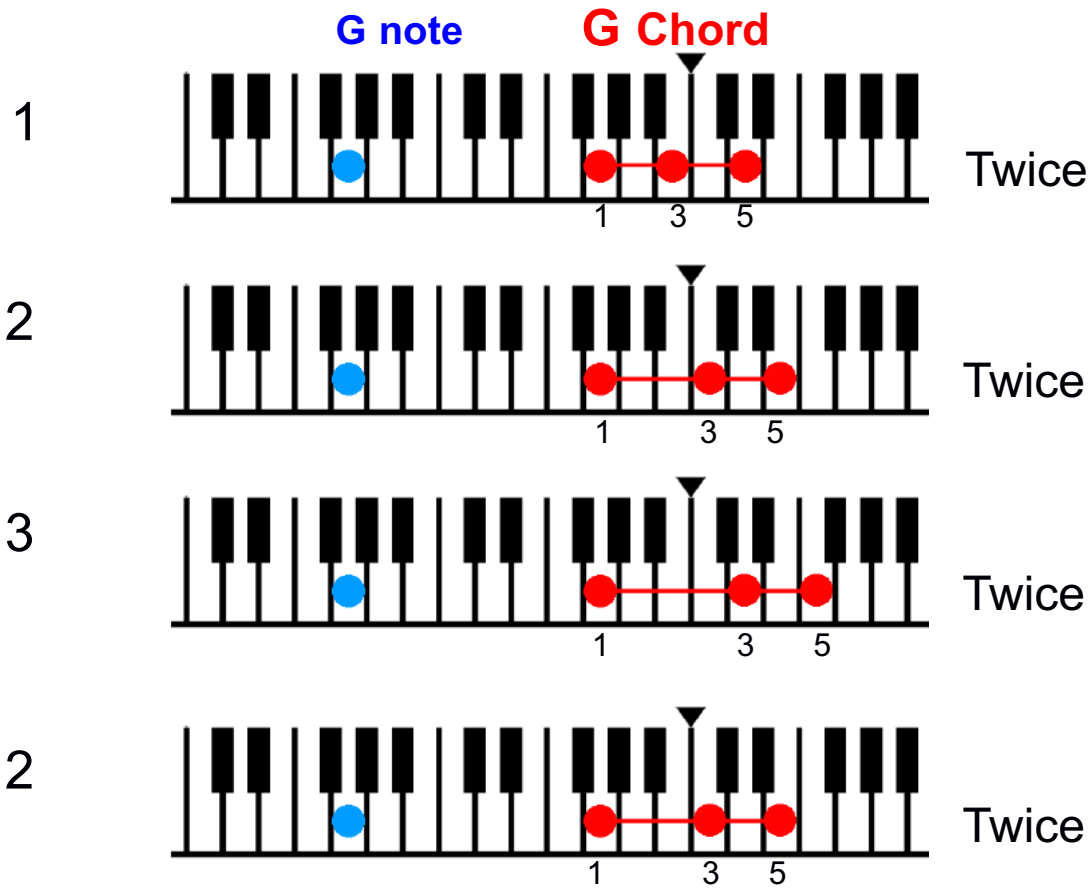
RHYTHM # 5

BLUES BROTHERS

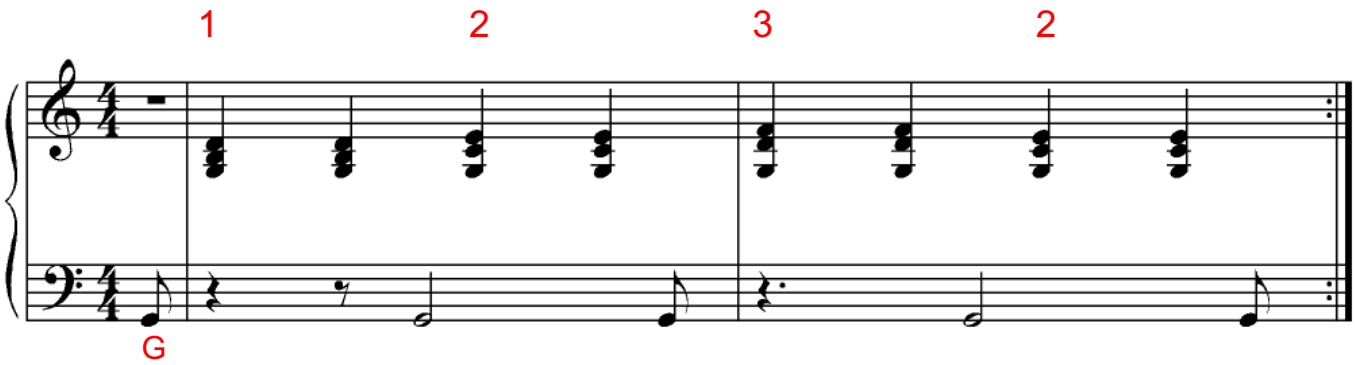
BLUES BROTHERS RHYTHM

This is a fun rhythm which reminds me of the Blues Brothers theme but is also used in the chorus of 'I'm A Believer' by The Monkees. See if you can also work out the theme tune for The Odd Couple and Sesame Street. Have fun!

Play each RIGHT HAND chord TWICE - Keep repeating



Repeat



Bring the BASS note (Left hand) in slightly before the RIGHT hand chord

YOU ARE NOW
READY FOR SECTION 3